DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 044 075 HE 001 777

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TITLE	Is the Present Anxiety about Public Education Justified? (Emphasis: Higher Education).
INSTITUTION	American Enterprise Inst. for Public Policy Research, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	6 May 70
NOTE	35p.; Paper presented to the Rational Debate Seminar, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1970
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.85
DESCRIPTORS	*Activism, *Administrator Responsibility, Community Attitudes, *Faculty, *Higher Education, *Responsibility, School Community Relationship, Student Behavior

ABSTRACT

The author feels the public's confidence in higher education is at a low ebb, a big change from 6 years ago when higher education had universal respect. The problems and upheavals that have plagued the campuses in the last few years can be traced to at least five causes. First, the presence of a majority of the public who were silent, confused, and went along with the minority of highly motivated, hostile, articulate, and irresponsible students and faculty members who created much of the problems. Second, the presence on many campuses of irresponsible and influential faculty members, who have the administration cowed, and who have used their power to further their own ends. Third, the background of many administrators who are often ex-faculty members and are not management oriented. Fourth, the presence of coercive groups on campus whose aim is to produce conflict. And fifth, the myths that circulate in society about the campus, such as rampant sexual promiscuity, the generation gap, and student approval of violence as a means to bring about change. These problems have to be faced: students should be respected, but not pampered; the administration should be more responsive to the overwhelming majority of non-militant faculty members; and coercive groups should be controlled so that they don't interfere with the rights of others. (AF)

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IS THE PRESENT ANXIETY ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION JUSTIFIED?
(EMPHASIS: HIGHER EDUCATION)

PRESENTATION OF

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TO THE

RATIONAL DEBATE SEMINAR
AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 6, 1970

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IS THE PRESENT ANXIETY ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION JUSTIFIED? (EMPHASIS: HIGHER EDUCATION)

BY DR. ALEX C. SHERRIFFS

The American citizen has learned to expect much from his educational institutions. This is a high compliment to the performance of these institutions in the past.

Our institutions are expected to carry out high societal purposes:

1) to transmit man's knowledge of man, his make-up, his environment, his culture, his history, his ideas, his dreams, and his failures. Human beings, unlike the monkey, do not need to start from scratch with each successive generation. Man can ensure a continuity of civilization, and his educational institutions are among the most important vehicles for doing so.

2) to stimulate curiosity so as to open doors to learning, to teach students how to ask useful questions, to explore with them ways to seek and to evaluate evidence, and to communicate the significance of bias in the process of reaching conclusions.

3) to develop in the young the basic tools necessary for learning, for communicating, and for effective living.

4) to function within a framework which accepts and values individual and group differences, which shuns as goals indoctrination and homogenization, and which works to provide for each individual the opportunity to develop to his capacity.

5) to account for the fact that man has always needed to believe in, belong to, or work for something bigger than himself.

6) to provide rich experience with mature teachers and scholars who serve youth as models for adulthood.

The American citizen learned to value highly his educational institutions. They functioned importantly for the society, the culture, and the individual growing student. As a reward to educators and to ensure that their job could be well done, three significant privileges were given: tenure, academic freedom, and unusual independence in hiring and promoting individual faculty members. We entered the 1960s with the academic profession in highest esteem. Its requests were seldom denied; its budget needs grew--and were met substantially, and in good spirit.

Thus it was. But it isn't now. Why?

The answer is, in part, because of the words and behaviors of a highly visible few in the education establishment. The public has no way of knowing how many these few represent, but the public does know that it doesn't hear from those who feel as it does. It is as though the intellectuals have turned against the very functions of education which they had helped educate the public to value and expect. The public reads in the newspaper, hears on the radio, and sees on television professors who only deride and mock the very culture which they were expected to transmit. And the public hears too often from those who are receiving or have just received the best education our society can provide, that this same society must be destroyed.

The public becomes aware, as it reads the college newspapers brought home by its student young, that there are many who are not

working to open doors to learning but who, rather, are demanding conformity to their own personal positions and who will shout down, harrass, and in some cases even refuse to teach those who express independent thought.

Instead of hearing of the needs for developing the fundamental tools necessary for learning, the public now hears from the campus an emotional call to action by youth--even before they are prepared through rational means to know why or how. Emotions are touted by too many as a legitimate substitute for reason.

Appreciation of individual and group differences--with all the richness that they provide a society--rather than a demand for a homogenizing conformity is characteristic only of a mature democratic society composed of mature citizens. At least, this is what most of us were taught in the past. It is not surprising, then, that the public is now confused, and often shocked, by the demand from intellectuals (of all people) for a one-think foreign policy, one-think sexual codes, simplistic explanations of racial tensions--and the demands of so many of these intellectuals that we be just like them.

The public sees its children being overwhelmed by totally negative attacks on U.S. institutions and officials, on democratic principles, and on campuses. In some quarters, even God is dead. What is left when the cynics, the critics, and the activists are done? Man needs something bigger than himself. The public does not know how few nor how many cynics there are, but there is only silence from other educators in rebuttal.

Those who have had delegated to them the important tasks of representing a society and of providing models of adulthood for youth have been most prone to imitating the young, emulating them, and seeking popularity rather than respect.

One cannot say often enough that those who engage in behavior patterns which disillusion the citizens of a democratic society are probably a "small percentage." "Probably," for the voices who speak for democracy are an even smaller percentage. The names of Riesman, Hook, Bettelheim, and Hayakawa are now well known, but mostly because they sing solo parts.

The changes in education have gone along with changes in society as a whole, to be sure. But, education's changes have preceded, rather than followed, society's. The changes have been dramatic, they have been massive, they are for our society quite unprecedented, and they have occurred in a very short period of time. Within an autobiographical frame of reference, I find it sobering...

It is sobering to feel a need to remind audiences of certain fundamentals of human nature, and of the alternate ways that man can live together--in some form of democracy, totalitarianism, or anarchy.

It is equally sobering to need to point out--and not only to youth--that without shared values, attitudes, codes, and some restraints, man is no more than an animal.

We are fortunate to have a society in which we determine our own restraints. In this democratic society, we make our own laws and can change them at will--majority will. We also choose our own leaders and can remove them by majority vote. In short, we

determine our own goals within a remarkable system. Perhaps fewer than one percent of all human beings have experienced the degree of self-determination that we enjoy. How strange that today we are forced to argue for the survival of that dignity.

Perhaps the basic challenge to our society has always been to balance freedom for the individual with freedom for others, too. The danger is that we will not work together to maintain that delicate balance, but will, as we today become polarized, allow ourselves to be represented only by those who advocate license--or freedom without responsibility--and by those who say we must have no freedom at all.

Democracy is fragile. Even in the best of times, its health requires that the majority participate actively in its processes. When too many "drop out," then those extremists who never could have won in fair competition for the political and social stage may find themselves on that stage alone--and in charge. It is no accident that in his Republic, Plato's most pessimistic dialogue was on democracy, and that the one which followed immediately was on despotism.

Who does not feel concern who compares our situation six years ago with our situation today.

Six short years ago in California, for example, higher education had universal respect. But today, we find a public outraged by, and fearful of, those on the campus--for they have organized and launched political and social action from within the people's own educational institutions.

Six years ago, no one dreamed that buildings would be captured, property destroyed, and official files rifled by some of the most educated of our youth.

Six years ago, neither students nor members of the faculty had kidnapped, captured, or held hostage representatives of a democratic society, whether Trustee, college president, or dean.

Six years ago, no one dreamed of a bombing on a campus. Recently, there was a fifteen-month period during which we had nearly ninety campus-related bombings in California alone. By 1969, members of the faculty of the University of Washington found themselves compelled to say in "the Seattle Statement":

> "...To condone acts of physical violence on the ground that they are mere exercises in freedom of speech is therefore to strike at the very foundations of academic freedom. The use of force and violence for purposes of intimidation is not freedom of speech but its very antithesis. To blur the distinction is to call in question the whole theory of democratic discussion....Arson, assault and battery, the deliberate destruction of scientific and other equipment, the looting of files of research notes and personal papers, the forcible occupation of buildings to obstruct the performance of university functions, the invasion of classrooms and the intimidation of students - these are not forms of speech at all, they are overt acts, obviously punishable as such. In society at large these are felonies or misdemeanors. In a university community, they are something more - they amount to a betrayal of freedom itself."

Six years ago, leaders on our campuses were working to effect an "open forum policy" so that students could hear firsthand the widest variety of opinions and attitudes from visiting speakers, including Communists. Today, on those same campuses, it is extremely difficult for the moderate, the responsible liberal, or the conservative to be heard at all.

Six years ago, it would not have occurred to a speaker that in almost any adult audience there would be a sizable number whose children were on drugs. Today, a speaker is uninformed if he does not maintain that assumption.

In six short years, our campuses have moved a long way--a long way from their original definition and high purpose, a long way from their position of public respect and confidence. How did this happen?

There are, perhaps, as many explanations offered for our recent societal upheaval as there are observers to it. Each individual will weight heavily those factors which he, because of bias, training, or life experience, sees of greatest import. But it has become clear to most of us that our anguish does not arise from a single cause. In my own analysis, I would stress at least five aspects which had to be present for our campus problems to have exploded with such apparent suddenness.

First, there had to be a majority of the public who were silent, confused, and even misinformed about matters as fundamental as the meaning of the behavior of their own children. But also, for the seeds of unrest to have found such fertile soil on the campuses, there had to be highly motivated, hostile, and articulate cliques of irresponsible faculty members on a number of them. These exercised unusual influence because of the immobilization of their generally preoccupied and timid colleagues. It was necessary, in addition, that the campus administrators be generally incapable of coping with irresponsibility and militancy both because of

personal factors and because of currently accepted "styles" of administration. It was necessary, too, that extremist groups and individuals, always present in our society, find themselves essentially without competition for the political stage, and thus achieve for themselves success upon success--often to their own great surprise. Finally, there were and are the actions, reactions, counter-actions, and counter-reactions that developed from this brew and which spiral the issues and the people into new and increasingly dangerous arenas.

What is the silent majority? Even a casual look reveals some things that are different these days about the citizens of our society--both young and old. There are too many examples of a lack of participation in normal affairs by great numbers of people, and of large numbers failing to support cultural values. Cultural values survive only when the people support them. One need not be a profound student of democracy to understand the implications of the following:

Two hundred classmates observed a bully taunt one of their number, then knee him in the groin, and finally use his toe repeatedly to remove that boy's eyeball. Not <u>one</u> of the two hundred cried "Stop," not one tried to get others to help separate the participants, and not one went for help. Ten years ago, it could not have happened. Two hundred classmates at a middle-class school would not have watched as though observing a television screen, and they would not later have explained their behavior as did these two hundred: "I am not my brother's keeper," or "It was not my fight," or "I didn't want to get involved."

Age is not the explanation, for equally clear were the implications when thirty-eight adults in New York simply watched from their apartment windows as a woman was stabbed to death. Three episodes of stabbing were involved, it all took thirty-five minutes, and the woman died horribly. Yet not one of the thirty-eight known observers so much as phoned for the police.

The fact that a very small percentage of students votes in student body elections should concern us deeply. So should the voting record of adults in school district elections.

The tiny attendance of students at campus meetings for outside speakers (except for extravagantly controversial ones) is paralleled by the usual nonattendance of most faculty at meetings of their colleagues, and by the nonparticipation of the public at most meetings of college boards of trustees or of local school boards.

Can we say anything about the "silent majority" other than the fact that it is silent?

There has been considerable research about youth. It tells us of current characteristics which partially explain how it is that so many have neither the strength nor the equipment to stand up individually for their convictions. Though better trained intellectually, they are found to be more isolated as individuals and more lonely. Their friendships are shorter in duration and more superficial in nature. David Riesman, author of <u>The Lonely Crowd</u>, reports that, during the past ten years, students average fewer friends each year. Thus, they lack the experiences to mature socially and emotionally as rapidly as generations did before.

Researchers also say that more youth show themselves less capable of postponing gratifications, less able to tolerate probabilities and shades of gray, and more demanding of absolutes.

Investigators generally agree that youth, as a group, is having problems with authority. And, as one of these investigators noted, how could it be otherwise when they have had so very little experience with it? Too many parents act with permissiveness not resulting from a particular theory of child rearing, but rather as a response to uncertainty and fearfulness about their own roles as adults.

And the communication between the young is poor indeed. An illustration in my own experience says a great deal:

One Saturday afternoon, a rooting section crowd became a mob and behaved in ways far beyond the acceptable. On the following Monday, I asked a class of four hundred--many of whom had participated--to indicate their attitudes about the debacle. I was a psychologist whose specialization was youth. I asked them to indicate by show of hands, "was the rooting section great," "could it stand a teeny bit of improvement," or "was it poor"? I took the vote on "great"ffirst. A number of hands went up here and there; the other class members were anxiously looking around like the audience at a tennis match during a fast volley. "What was in?" was clearly the question on their minds. Soon, hands were going up around hands that were already up--the "ripple effect." In three minutes, eighty-three percent were voting "great."

Then I asked for an anonymous paper in which they were to tell me how it was great and how it might be greater. In the secrecy and privacy of those papers, eighty-six percent now stated that the rooting section was so bad it should be abolished! And over fifty percent stated, "But what's the use of my feeling this way when I'm the only one?"

I could give all too many examples of this kind of behavior--"in" voting before the group, standing for positions absolutely contrary to personal and private belief.

Let me note here that youth is not without cultural values, but merely is too often unable to express them. A number of factors have worked together to cause our young to be so immobilized in standing for their own feelings, to cause them to be so oriented to what is "in" for the group, to cause them to be incapable of dealing with the minority who now dominate the stage--political and social; the stage that they, the majority, have deserted.

It is worthy of note that:

1) These youngsters are the first children raised by parents who were unsure of their role as parents--even of their rights as parents; the first parents in history who, instead of depending on their feelings, had to "look it up" in a book!

I can give an illustration of the effect:

I gave an anonymous questionnaire to almost 1,000 sophomores. Two of the questions asked were: "Do you love your parents?" and "Do you respect your parents?" Ninety-three percent checked "yes" to the first question. Only fifty-one percent checked "yes" to

the second question. I called in every eighth student to ask, "Can you help me to understand the differences between ninety-three percent and fifty-one percent?" One girl's response covers most of their answers:

"Sure, I love my parents. They mean well. But respect....? When I was in a social club at Berkeley High, I came home one day and told my mother that our club was going to have its overnight party at our house. Mother turned pale. I told her that chaperones were no longer 'in', and she turned paler. I hoped she would say, 'No, you aren't,' and get me out of it, because I didn't have the courage to say no to the others of my own age. If she said 'no', I could have blamed her--I thought that's what mothers were for.

"Instead, Mother phoned the parents of the other girls and asked what she should do. I listened. She thought it was wrong, but...she was afraid I'd be unpopular. She thought it was wrong, but...she didn't want me to be 'different'. She thought it was wrong, but...she didn't want my fifteen-year-old girlfriends to think she was 'square'. In short, my mother had to discover what her values were--and what mine were to be--by a telephone poll."

Youngsters need adults to be models, to respect, to argue with, and to test. They need a point of view. They need adults who believe in themselves and in something. The young can decide what to become, and what not to become, only by observing real adults. They can learn little that is good from observing Jello--whether in the form of parents, deans of students, teachers, or even clergymen.

2) Also very difficult for youth--and hard on adults, too--is a current cult: the adulation of youth in America. For a child to become an adult, he must, of course, go through what we call "adolescence." This is a period during which the youngster learns where his parents leave off and he begins. He must develop a separateness which enables him to know whether he believes something or is merely imitating his parents' belief, whether he desires something or has been told by his parents that it is desirable. All of us learn from parents much of what to be like and what not to be like. But, to the adolescent struggling with his dependency needs, it is a matter of "is it me speaking, or am I speaking for them?"

To go through an adolescent separateness--which is often more symbolic than real--the age group members tend to conform to one another, especially in matters which are almost "tribal" in nature: for example, in costume, dance, folk heroes, music, and slanguage. The particular expressions of each adolescent generation have caused parents and teachers alike to shake their heads in dismay. This is as it should be, for it gives the adolescent a kind of independence in action, but without total revolt.

My own parents were ideal during my adolescence. Mother thought my dirty cords meant that I was unclean; she fussed. Both parents believed my swing music to be loud and barbaric, and Mother would often play a little Brahms hoping it would rub off on me. Both were embarrassed by the jitterbug, and they worried that I would never learn the King's English. It was ideal. We had

our separateness. And it was not necessary for me to take drugs to get a reaction. Later, when I felt that I had discovered "me", I noticed that my parents had "matured" during my psychological absence.

But how is it today? Too often, adults imitate their adolescents. Daughter puts on a mini-skirt, Mother follows suit. Likewise, Father says "cool" to prove he is one of the boys. Both parents learn the Twist and progress to the Watusi.

Adolescence is a time when youngsters should be somewhat separate, but it is also a time when they need to know that there is strength and understanding in the adults. Now, instead--and for the first time in our history--the youngster looks over his shoulder and feels, "My God, here they come again."

By their imitative behavior, adults are saying to youth, "You've got it made," and this is unnerving to the young. To become adult is almost to lose position and status.

And, outside the family, other adult models--many teachers, clergymen, school and college administrators including deans of students--behave in the same imitative ways; and they are representatives of our society and its institutions. They claim expertness as well as adulthood. Yet too many of them prefer peace and popularity to respect. Too many think of the normal expression of authority as a burden, though delegated to them because of the position they hold by a democratic society. A number confuse authority and authoritarian; they reject the former in a manner that smacks of the latter.

3) Progress has brought great good for young and old alike. It also has had its costs. At the turn of the century, most youngsters in growing up had experience with real responsibility and real challenge in relation to the family's work. Over ninety percent of American families were engaged in agriculture. Their children had experience with a variety of adult models doing real work for real purposes and goals. Today, only seven percent of families produce all of our goods and fiber.

At the turn of the century, there was also ample opportunity for youth in commerce or industry, for work with purpose. It was even necessary to pass child labor laws to keep them in school or at home. Today, if all students wanted such experiences, we would fail them, for, thanks to automation and business know-how, we scarcely have jobs for all heads of household.

In 1900, only nine percent of seventeen-year-olds were in school; now there are well over ninety percent.

Today, for many, responsibility and challenge are found only in relation to grade point average. And for many, work is only for one's own pleasures--a transistor, a record player, a sports car.

The cost in judgment, in confidence born of experience, and in the concept of earning one's way or of work well done when this has not been a meaningful part of life, can be measured only indirectly. Observation tells us that the cost is high.

4) Affluence has contributed to some of our problems. Particularly, affluence leads to a certain arrogance in some youth--an expectation to receive, even though giving little in return. And the comforts and certainties of affluence also result, sadly, in an unsureness that one could succeed if faced with a challenge.

Middle class youngsters generally are given what they want--sometimes even before they know they want it. Parents too often can't think of reasons to deny them. In giving, parents tend to forget it is more satisfying for youngsters to build, to grow, to contribute, and to participate than simply to be spectators, and recipients of the accomplishments of others.

Affluence, of course, has affected adults as well as children, and it should not be surprising that like spoiled children we also have spoiled adults who simply and irresponsibly take what they want without comprehending what they are doing. It should not be surprising, either, that some middle class youngsters on the campus take the law into their own hands and interpret our value for freedom as granting them personal license.

5) Another of the forward moves in our society which has produced its own backlash is the explosion in man's knowledge about himself and the world around him. It has been estimated that man has learned more in the past decade than in his entire previous history and that he will learn more in the next decade than in all that went before.

It is not necessary to dwell on the many good things that have accrued to mankind because of informational advances. But, ironically, the silencing effect of this same knowledge explosion too often goes unmentioned. More and more, individuals are becoming dependent on the so-called "experts" for judgments rather than trusting their own information and wisdom.

6) These days, Americans act as though change, even when it results in instability, is an end in itself. Paradoxically, human beings need a sense of permanence and stability in order to be strong enough to be adventurous, to stand apart from a group, and to take a chance--even though it might result in ridicule or error. Down through the ages, man has sought and profited from identification with a purpose bigger than himself. He has sought immortality, real or symbolic.

When it becomes modern and stylish for members of the clergy to become activists in pursuit of their own personal socio-political beliefs, while still identifying themselves with their religion, then many people become less sure of themselves and of their relation to religion, but note!--astrology then becomes the mode! Why else the intense fascination with the zodiac? When representatives of the church attack the very symbols of the church, youth does not become irreligious. Human needs don't disappear, and so youth's search turns to Zen, mystical experience, drugs, and quasi-private cults.

7) Increasingly large, aloof, and distant government has led to a citizenry whose members are becoming less and less involved. It is no wonder they are called "the silent majority."

There are other important factors, too, which have reduced the level of participation--on and off campus. I believe the public's confidence in its schools has been shaken because, in part, the symptoms of the silenced generation have been particularly evident on the campus. The faculties who were assumed by the public to be the leaders and societal representatives among us have shown up very poorly. Further, there are those in the academic community who have chosen to exploit the majority. Those on the campus know it. Those off campus are fast learning it. I think it is important, too, to recognize that the voices from the education establishment are often mouthing only simplistic explanations for campus politicization and turmoil--explanations which the public does not find plausible and which the public sees as self-serving.

It is correctly said that the quality of our educational institutions depends upon their faculties. What has been the quality of faculty behavior in relation to the unrest which has so reduced public confidence?

It requires little thought to conclude that, for a campus to be in trouble, there must be members of the faculty who are both irresponsible and influential. It should be obvious that administrators do not fear students, for students have an average stay on a campus of a little over two years, they are young, relatively inexperienced, and easily influenced. The fiction that our campus problem is simply a student problem is a fiction born because of its convenience to both the faculty and the administration. Too often both would have the public believe that society was facing a "new breed" of student rather than a power grab by certain elements

within some of our faculties. It is estimated that, at one time or another, one in every ten students has become involved in campus disorders--but often as a tool for his elders. On this point, David Riesman notes:

> I can think of very few colleges that have had serious student movements without faculty participation. Even though students on both the left and the right like to feel that they are independent of us adults, they are in some ways dependent on adult support. What one finds in some universities is that faculty members have tended to exploit student protest in pursuit of their own grievances or their own settling of scores with administrators. (Psychology Today, October, 1969).

In order to understand how an element of the faculty could behave in ways alien to the whole tradition of the academic community, it is necessary to understand that never before have our faculties been so pampered--nor so young.

Since Sputnik, and until recently, the faculty stood upon a pedestal of public adoration. Education was America's answer to Russia's challenge for the minds of men through scientific achievement. Then, with student populations exploding and the production of PhDs several years behind the need, the recruiting of faculty became an endeavor competing favorably with the recruiting of football players. Young scholars who had been singled out because of their brightness during early school years were sought and fought over as graduate students--with fellowships, scholarships, and teaching-assistantships as the bait. As their PhDs were completed, these young scholars were wooed once again by institutions which competed with offers of high salaries, tenure, and, significantly, lower and lower teaching loads.

In the late fifties and early sixties, some of our major institutions added to their faculties as many as a third of these intensely pursued youngsters each year. It was not long before a prevailing majority on the faculties on many of our campuses were "young Turks" who had no investment in the traditions or history of the campus which employed them. Too often, they came in search of a congenial research setting with an aura of prestige, but without a compensating desire to either serve or teach more than necessary. They soon had tenure, and thereafter felt little concern for administrative response to irresponsibility.

It is human, when so sought after and so favored, to accept one's own importance. Humility is not nurtured by such conditions.

There is yet another occupational hazard that we should note here. PhDs know about one specific area as much as, or more than, any other human being--at least for a few months after writing their theses. And PhDs, like other people, because they are human, tend to generalize. There is a strong tendency for them to think that their expertise in a specific area automatically relates to a broad general wisdom. Probably no profession is more prone to making absolute pronouncements about general matters on which it has no more specific information than the rest of the population than academia.

Given these characteristics, and recognizing that the silent majority exists in the faculty as well as in the rest of society, those faculty members, often the younger ones, who believe that the world is too complex for the average citizen, or who associate

themselves with particular social or political movements, can and have used their genius--and their students--to further their own ends against the best interests of both their more passive colleagues and our society.

They also have used their influence to recruit new faculty members who share their ideological persuasions. In many institutions, new faculty members are nominated by present staff members, and administrative rejection of such nominations is extremely rare.

A final comment to the layman who has been so patient and who has tried so hard to understand. The academic society is a remarkably closed society. It has its own codes, and demands conformity on many matters. There are few professions that can compete with this one in the exercise of discipline on its members. It also is a profession whose members readily band together, regardless of whatever internal differences, against all outside intervention--even constructive criticism. Already feeling superior to those of less intellectual achievement, criticism from the outside is seen, even by many of the more moderate members, as without justification, wrong, and a dangerous precedent.

We find today a clear illustration of self-fulfilling prophesy. Some faculty groups act almost compulsively to upset the citizens who are the parents of the children on their campuses and the providers of their facilities and livelihoods. All the while, these same educators utter grave predictions of a "right-wing reaction" against the campuses. As some of the faculty escalate their insults, the public becomes ever more ready to lash out--but it is the public

as a whole, and not a special element within it, not just parents or the anticipated "right-wing reactionaries."

A third critical element in our campus problems is the campus administrator. Here the difficulty is as fundamental as who he is, and where he comes from. Most administrators were functioning with apparent success only a few years ago. But not today. One must realize that administrators, to be successful for their institutions and for the society whose institutions these are, must be able to wear two hats with relative comfort: They must represent the public interest and the well-being of their students and faculty. This was not difficult when the public interest coincided with faculty goals--unbiased quality education. In those times, the administrator was a coordinator, an interpreter, a fund-raiser, often a mediator within the campus community, and generally a figurehead. Now, the situation is more difficult. The public's basic desires haven't changed, but a visible segment of the faculty is using the institution for political purposes, is demanding the right to exercise its bias in the classroom, and is milking the prestige of the institution for its own personal goals.

Through the administrators, members of the faculty were able to convince a friendly public that it was in the interest of society that they be allowed to pursue the truth wherever it might lead, just so long as they did not tip the scales in the direction of personal bias. The public's acceptance of this was described as "academic freedom." Today, the public is being asked by some to redefine academic freedom in order to grant license to the widest

range of behaviors for the faculty and even for students. But a counter voice is absent.

What has happened to the role of an administrator is easy to see. Almost all present administrators have been chosen from the ranks of the faculty, after faculty screening. The wives of these administrators have friends who are, for the most part, faculty wives. The administrator himself was hired originally as a faculty member by faculty members. He depended on them for increases in rank and salary. He, like the faculty member, has been subject to the demands of the academic subculture all of his adult life. It is a rare human being who can wear two hats effectively in an emotionally and ideologically polarized situation, especially when he sees himself as a member of only one of the parties in conflict.

His role is even more difficult because the faculty distrusts administrators, aware of the other hat they might wear. The public tends to distrust academic administrators because it sees them as ignoring their responsibility to the public interest.

A fourth ingredient is made up of the coercive groups which have often been visible leaders of episodes of violence. Tactically and motivationally, the similarities between these groups are greater than their differences. They are alike in that they would never have held the stage if the majority were functioning, if the faculty were united and responsible, and if the administrators had wisdom and courage. They are alike in that they intend to seize power, or to destroy. They advance causes not to achieve them, but to produce conflict. They are, by and large, well organized

and disciplined, and apparently have means of communication and travel superior to that of those they attack. Their pattern has been first to analyze friction points on individual campuses, then to seek out support in strategic places on the campus and in the surrounding community. Certain faculty members, clergymen, sympathetic media people, and indigenous radicals or reflex liberals fill the bill. They push constantly, and they push for more than is possible. They wait for a mistake. As soon as it's even slightly credible, they invoke some greater "cause." The issue may have been visitation rights in girls' rooms; it soon becomes an issue of freedom of assembly, or speech, or academic freedom. They simplistically paint the administrators and those of society who would support lawful processes as rigid, authoritarian, and out of step with the times. Usually, they set up the battle plan so they win either way: for example, if there is capitulation in relation to a sit-in, they control the building and move forward with new demands; if the administration holds firm and eventually calls for outside help, the militants contrive and then point to police brutality. They are willing to nibble, one issue at a time, because each success ensures a greater likelihood for the next success. This is a strategy of takeover. It is, in their own words, revolution.

The public watches in fear and anger, for the progress of the militants has been rapid and far-reaching--far-reaching enough so that many thousands of parents have youngsters who have been caught up in the tactics, if not the ideologies. The public's

response becomes less dispassionate with each passing month.

Some faculty members have begun to voice their concerns, too. In the January, 1970, issue of Measure, we read:

> Not that we believe that violence has stopped, will stop, or will be stopped without a hard, protracted struggle. The wrecked office of the President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is one of the newer reminders that violence walks in our midst; and for those Professor Hope-for-the-Bests who think that red-painted obscenities in the Institute's rugs should be explained away as mere aberrations of prolonged adolescence, there is the equally reprehensible and hideous reminder put before us by Princeton's 34-year-old revolutionary sociologist Charles W. Wheatley, who is quoted in Time as saying: "Older faculty are ineducable when it comes to the revolution, the movement. They won't be shot, you know; a little island will be found for them some place."

I think it is vital today to differentiate between three look-alikes: adolescent rebellion, the American right to dissent, and revolution. They may look alike, but they are not, and many people who should know better get them confused.

I have described adolescent rebellion as an essential, healthy stage between childhood and adulthood. It can only be destructive if, on the one hand, it is treated with total rigidity, or, and this is more likely these days, it is not resisted at all and thus misses its value for teenagers who must go to more extreme behaviors to achieve an appropriate adult response.

The American right to dissent is worth preserving at any cost. It represents the strength of our society. It is dissent which ensures that there are civil liberties and civil rights, that there is individuality, and that there can be the potential for constructive change.

Revolution is neither growth nor a form of dissent. It is something far different. In this society, it is an effort by a few to thwart the will of the majority and to do so by destroying the democratic system itself.

Finally, there are myths which circulate in society and are supported by too many people of influence who simply parrot them without thinking things through. Some of these myths are given credibility by sincere individuals who simply cannot or do not wish to comprehend what is happening. This all-out attack on our democratic system is a "first" for us, after all.

Though the public has been remarkable in its ability to sense the basic problem, some of the myths that the public believes, or half believes, have served to make people unsure enough of themselves to keep them from responding consistently or appropriately.

I have already talked to the facts which belie several of the more prevalent fables of our time. For example, the myth that it is primarily the students who are engaged in unrest is both an oversimplification and a distortion.

The myth that we are experiencing a "generation gap" that is nearly a chasm has done great harm. It has caused many people of all ages to become self-conscious in their relationships rather than to be themselves. If one will but listen, youth's dilemma is almost the opposite. Adults have put youth in the role of leader, have tried to remove a gap essential to the process of maturation--that is, adolescence.

Somewhat related is the false belief that students are falling over themselves in their desire to participate in governing the universities. An anonymous faculty member describes it this way:

> "...delusions that trouble will never come and that, having come, it will do no permanent harm are, in fact, children in a large family of sturdy misconceptions. None among them has led to stranger consequences than the supposition that the majority of students are deeply interested in governing every aspect and dimension of the schools at which they enroll. Columbia's experience in this respect would be pathetic, if it were not also heroic. Administrators, faculty, and students at Columbia came away from their great ordeal of May and June 1968 persuaded that a university is a community of sorts, that it should be governed by a body of elected representatives, and that these representatives should include elected student representatives empowered to vote. But in October 1968, a well-advertised meeting called at Columbia to air the question of the proposed University Senate was attended by less than 100 persons. In November 1968, the student turnout at elections was the lowest in recent years. According to the Columbia Forum, 'Only 14 per cent of those eligible in the College (394 students) and 4 per cent of the graduate students (166 students) voted.' The faculty Executive Committee leading the drive to place Columbia under the rule of a Senate accommodated to the imagined fact of student interest took these warnings to heart and so conducted its subsequent operations as to develop student interest. In the course of creating the very thing they had believed already existed, the Committee distributed 25,000 48-page pamphlets concerning the future Senate. A faculty leader is quoted in the Forum as having said: 'Someone from the Executive Committee...spoke to groups from every student body in every division. I remember one night when there was one member of the Executive Committee on every floor of the dorms, right before the vote.' By such means, student participation in the vote to ratify the Senate scheme was raised to 40.9%.
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> "What would have happened, it may be asked, if the Executive Committee had not haunted the dorms and strained the mimeograph machines? The answer appears to have been given this autumn at a neighboring institution, Queens College, in the City University of New York, which has strong claims to being the campus most disrupted in 1969, its administration building having served as a traffic center and dormitory for student

> 'activists', both white and black, for weeks on end, with time out for Easter recess. In consequence of its troubles, Queens conceived an Academic Senate, to be ratified or rejected by a week-long vote. The vote was conducted with the help of the Honest Ballot Association. The polls were open from 9 to 9 through five weekdays and till noon on Saturday. The issue was thoroughly publicized. Yet out of 24,429 students, 2,724 voted, or about 11%. Asked to comment on the turnout, a member of the Queens faculty said, for publication in these columns, "The idea that most of the students want this change is baloney - if I may call the sausage by its name."
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> Measure, December 1969

We hear over and over again that "students have real grievances." The statement is usually followed by another, "Though, of course, I don't condone their tactics." Involved here is a half myth, half truth. But those who speak of student grievance usually have been fooled, at least partially, by the issues put forth by the militants. These issues are not the real grievances.

It is becoming increasingly clear that students do have real grievances, for they suffer an unconscionable neglect by faculty members on many campuses. The meaning of the ever-lighter teaching load does not escape students. The office hour so often unmet by the faculty member says something, too. The absentee full professor and the more often present teaching assistant attest to the same thing. Teaching students is not, in the minds of many faculty members, the primary purpose of the university or of their careers.

Research and scholarship which bring status in academe have left little time for students. However, there has yet to be a "demonstration" or violence around this issue. It would seem more likely that, feeling frustrated and disappointed after working for years to get to college only to find there an impersonality born

of disinterest, these students are more likely to be caught up in somebody else's "demonstration," if only to let off steam in relation to the "system"which has failed them.

For some time, we have listened to a chorus which tells us that in the younger generation there is a "new morality." Usually, we are also told that we should adjust to it. The "new morality" has been preached so effectively that the new generation, as well as the old, believes it to exist. The College Poll finds that seventy-five percent of students believe that most students, whether male or female, engage in sex relations before marriage. In surveys of my own, I have found that senior college women, for example, when asked to estimate the percentage of senior women who have had premarital sexual intercourse also predict on the average that same seventy-five percent. However, recent studies by Freedman and Halleck, as well as others, indicate that the percentages are in fact between twenty and twenty-two. In the 1950s, Kinsey--and later Ehrmann--reported similar findings. If the data on sexual behavior in the sixties surprise you, then this, itself, is evidence of the effectiveness of a myth.

There are other data on youth which stand in interesting relation to popular belief. For example, from the College Poll we learn that eighty-seven percent of students stated in 1968 that they did not believe violence of any kind is ever justified in bringing about change in the college or university. Eighty percent believed that students who break the law on campus should be arrested and expelled. Seventy-three percent reported believing

in God or in a Supreme Being. Eighty percent believed that voluntary ROTC belongs on the campus. Seventy-six percent favored campus participation in defense contracts. And sixty-seven percent voted favorably on the CIA.

It becomes clear that generalizations have been made on the basis of the behavior of student extremists and by the wishful thinking of some emotionally involved observers of the campus scene.

It is important to note, however, that there are some startling differences in the attitudes of the thiry percent of the seventeen-to-twenty-three age group who are in college as compared with the seventy percent of the same age group who are not. According to the Yankelovich poll for the Columbia Broadcasting System, when asked whether they would welcome more emphasis on law and order, fifty-seven percent of college students said yes, while eighty percent of those youths not in college so responded. Twice as many in college indicated they would welcome more sexual freedom--forty-three percent as compared to twenty-two percent. While sixty percent of those not in college believed patriotism to be very important, only thirty-five percent of college youth agreed. Saying that they easily accept the prohibition against marijuana were forty-eight percent of college students, while seventy-two percent of noncollege youth so responded. Where we are given data on the parents, we find that youths not in college are quite similar to their parents in those attitudes which relate to our mores. Those in college are less so. It can be said that, though there is generally little evidence of a generation gap, there is considerable

evidence of a cultural gap effected by only a few years on the college campus.

As 1969 closed, there were predictions of efforts among the militants to "cool it" for the time being. An election year, a desire to get public support for the eighteen-year-old vote, and recent effective legal actions against violence were among the reasons. Also, man's growing concern with his environment and with the disastrous effects of drugs on his children will occupy much of his attention.

As we all know, the "cool" was short-lived, and campuses and their surrounding communities are now being subjected to even worse violence than before. And the public is more afraid and more angry than before.

I have taken some time to say that the causes of our present discontent are several and complex. Because time is limited, some aspects have been neglected and exceptions to generalizations sometimes have been ignored.

The public's confidence in higher education is lower today than probably ever before in this country. Many of our institutions have in fact been deflected from their pursuit of society's highest goals.

When we address ourselves to the all-important question, "How do we improve this difficult situation?" our behavior will depend on our understanding of the causes of the symptoms we hope to treat.

To the extent that confusion within the public is a part of our problem, the people should be provided accurate information.

Evidence must be substituted for fantasy, facts for myths. The full complexity of the campus crisis must be communicated. We have suffered too long with simplistic interpretations. The majority must be allowed to learn, where this is the case, that it is in fact the majority. It is important that the public see that those who represent them are individuals who are spokesmen for basic educational and societal values. The variety of channels for citizen effectiveness must be made apparent to those who have for too long remained uninvolved in their social institutions. It is ironic that while some groups have developed sophisticated ways to get around or even to injure our democratic system, all too many citizens need a course in Applied Civics 1-A.

To the extent that the representatives of the people have been preoccupied with the activists and have related to their "demands" as a point of departure, it becomes evermore important that educational boards and commissions become effectively accountable to the citizenry.

To the extent that administrators are part of our problem, appointments to such positions should take into account the difficulties of the position for those who are too closely dependent on a constituency at one pole in a societal difference of opinion. Possibilities for finding administrators who are management-oriented and above politics must be improved.

To the extent that elements of the faculty represent an important part of our problem, appropriate administrative support for the many responsible faculty members, a reevaluation of tenure

policies, and a program to ensure a better acceptance of the teaching function are all essential.

Many administrators have been reflexly responsive to the demands of the militant faculty few. If only they would listen to the many--and there are many. On April 23, 1970, we read of a survey of the attitudes of 60,447 university and college faculty members: "More than 80 percent of the respondents held that 'campus demonstrations by militant students are a threat to academic freedom'. More than 76 percent agreed either strongly or with reservations that 'students who disrupt the functioning of a college should be expelled or suspended.'...the survey was taken during the 1968-69 academic year."

Coercive groups must be controlled so that they do not interfere with the rights of others. Implementation of relevant legislation and regulations is important, as is the education of students and the citizenry as to the true meaning of the militants' behavior. Policy decisions by campus leaders must not result from coercion. Otherwise, matters become far worse.

Students in general need to be educated as to what present seventeen-to-twenty-three year olds are like. They don't know. They must receive appropriate interest and attention from faculty members and administrators. They must see that even those who behave normally will be listened to. They should be used in advisory capacities where they have competence. But they should not find themselves being pandered to. Giving them responsibilities for which they are not ready and in relation to which they cannot

represent other students is not a kindness. They know that those who would buy their support are insincere.

Further, institutions should never require students to belong to organizations if those organizations are ones which will take positions in their name on political or social affairs. The authority of the state or community must not be used to force a student to support attitudes alien to his own beliefs. In this regard, the present requirement on many campuses that students belong to a "student government" and support a so-called "student press" becomes suspect.

These are some of the directions necessary, in my opinion, if there is to be a reduction in the present anxiety about public higher education. As has been made abundantly clear, I believe that the anxiety has real bases and will not disappear as a result of any token solutions. In the months ahead, many constructive steps must be taken both on and off the campus. Neither town nor gown alone can solve our crisis.

The presumably broader question has been raised, "How relevant is education in America today?" Whatever one's answers might have been in normal times as to curriculum, course content, class size, teacher training, student mix, and academic goals, answers today depend upon the prior questions: will education be free of violence coercion, and bias, and will it be appropriate to a free society committed to majority decision.